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Dear Friends:

The 2002 short legislative session has ended. While we passed several important pieces of legislation, I am disappointed we did not reach agreement on a major tax restructuring plan or address the state budget deficit.

I voted for a plan in the House that would have helped homeowners, small businesses and farmers by offsetting expected property tax increases. This plan would have created a better climate for economic growth and addressed the current state budget deficit, which has been intensified by the recent national recession. I believe this proposal, while not perfect, answered many of the questions about fairness and equity that have long plagued our tax system.

I felt we should confront these economic issues now rather than wait and hope that the economy gets better later. We hoped to avoid cutting important state services, including health care for our senior citizens and funding for public education. Unfortunately, a majority in the Indiana Senate did not share this opinion, and we were unable to establish a compromise in the closing days of the session. It concerns me that certain politicians are unwilling to address our state's outdated and unfair taxing system and the short-term financial stability of our state. The governor has called us back for a special session May 14th, and I remain hopeful that we can reach some consensus on these issues before more painful cuts become necessary.

Despite my concerns about the budget deficit and taxes, I am pleased we did enact several proposals helpful to a variety of Hoosiers. We passed landmark public safety and anti-terrorism legislation, enacted a number of provisions that protect children and approved several health care initiatives. I detail a number of those new laws inside this newsletter.

Please contact me if you have questions or concerns about state government. You can e-mail me at H66@in.gov or call toll free at 1-800-382-9842.

Terry

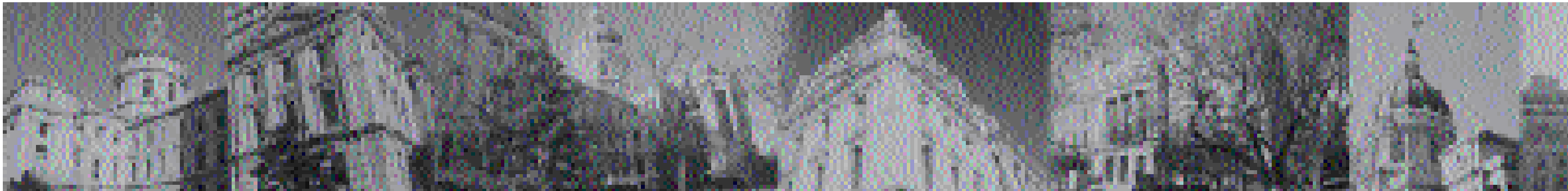


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Goodin legislation helps crime victims

While this year’s legislative session was frustrating in some respects, I was able to continue my work on bills fighting crime and protecting victims.

House Bill 1012, which I co-authored and was signed into law by the Governor, concerns **victim impact statements**. It requires judges to allow family members to make impact statements detailing how the crime affected their lives in those cases where the offender is sentenced to death or life without parole. These statements would be made in open court after the offender is sentenced by the judge.

These family members never will have the chance to replace a loved one whose life has been taken through the violent criminal act of another person. However, I hope that speaking directly to the offender might be a crucial step in helping victims put the tragedy behind them and move on with their lives.

Designed to prevent a tragedy, Senate Bill 20, which I co-sponsored, involves Indiana in a nationwide program designed to alert the general public whenever a child is abducted and believed to be in grave danger. The **Amber Alert program** is a voluntary partnership between law enforcement agencies

and broadcasters that goes into action whenever there is an abduction case in which the child’s life may be threatened.

Amber Alert is triggered when law enforcement officers confirm that a child has been taken, the circumstances indicate that the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death and there is enough descriptive information about the child, the abductor and the suspect’s vehicle to make officials believe that an immediate broadcast alert would help the case.

Once those criteria have been met, participating radio and television stations would interrupt normal programming to broadcast information about the child, using an emergency alert system typically used during severe weather. The alert provides the description of the child and the abductor, as well as a telephone number to call with information.



REP. GOODIN DISCUSSES LEGISLATION WITH LT. GOV. JOE KERNAN.

New laws aid police and firefighters

I co-authored House Bill 1081, which requires that **medical and hospital care expenses for a police officer or firefighter** who is injured or contracts an illness in the line of duty be paid for by the police district, town, township, fire protection district, or provider unit in fire protection territories.

After the terrorist attacks on September 11th, we have all realized the value of these brave citizens who protect us every day. It is important to support them in any way possible. This bill ensures that their medical needs are met during their time of service.

House Bill 1208, which I co-

authored, addresses concerns from The Volunteer Firefighters Association. This bill **protects citizens who donate equipment to fire departments and volunteer fire departments from liability**. The Association wanted to be certain that those who make a donation would not be faced with a lawsuit if something unfortunate were to happen with the equipment.

HB 1208 also amends the conditions and manner under which a blue light may be displayed on a vehicle by a member of a volunteer fire department.

Battery by body waste

A new law makes it a **Class A misdemeanor to place body waste on another person**. Senate Bill 293, which I co-sponsored, also makes placing body waste where another might come into contact with it a Class B misdemeanor. The law includes enhanced penalties if the waste is infected with disease. A trial court may order restitution for the costs of testing to determine if a victim has become infected as a result of the crime.

This legislation was prompted by an incident in which urine was thrown on a young woman.

House passes Goodin resolution on fair farming competition

This year I was proud to author a resolution **urging Congress to enact legislation to protect the interests of American farmers from overseas exports**. The resolution was passed by the House of Representatives.

A recent report from the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) that detailed unfair price differentials in the cost of agricultural inputs for producing soybeans prompted me to write this resolution.

According to the GAO report, these cost disparities are due in part to the discriminatory pricing practices of suppliers who provide seed to South American farmers at costs significantly below those charged to American farmers. Additionally, the report indicates that U.S. patent laws and other intellectual property laws may provide incentives to suppliers of agricultural products to discriminate against American farmers.

Some suppliers have



REP. GOODIN STUDIES LEGISLATION IN THE HOUSE CHAMBER.

imposed contract provisions on our farmers to keep them from using such traditional cost-saving practices as saving seed. The terms of these contracts are not being imposed on foreign farmers.

My resolution asks Congress to take appropriate action to ensure fair foreign competition with American agricultural products, including such things as modifying patent laws and other intellectual property laws of the United States. I believe this effort should be part of a farm policy that provides a safety net for all crop, livestock farmers and ranchers, both large and small.

Businesses form “Coalition to Support Indiana Seniors”

Seniors will benefit from the creation of the new Coalition to Support Indiana Seniors. The Coalition consists of businesses that cater to seniors by **offering an alternative payment date plan** that does not conflict with the arrival of Social Security payments, pensions or any other form of retirement income.

A business that joins the Coalition will advertise its membership. At that time seniors will be able to contact the business directly to arrange payments on the alternative schedule. I was proud to co-sponsor this bill which will make money management a little simpler for our older citizens.

Laws address terrorism, emergencies

Project Hoosier SAFE-T

The new anti-terrorism law, House Bill 1001, provides funding for Project Hoosier SAFE-T, a system that allows public safety agencies to communicate with each other during emergencies.

Any event that crosses county lines, such as a severe storm, a police chase or a fatal accident puts the first responders and the victims at risk if officials are unable to cooperate and respond quickly. The new system will connect all participating local, state and federal public safety agencies.

Aircraft offenses

Senate Bill 10 permits the use of reasonable force to stop a person from hijacking or seizing unlawful control of an aircraft in flight. The bill also makes it a felony to enter a secured area of an airport, use force or violence to hijack an aircraft in flight or commit criminal confinement on an aircraft.

Nerve agents

Last year’s anthrax scare evidenced the need for greater security against chemical and biological warfare. House Bill 1029 establishes training and certification standards to allow emergency medical technicians in certain counties to administer antidotes for exposure to VX nerve agents.

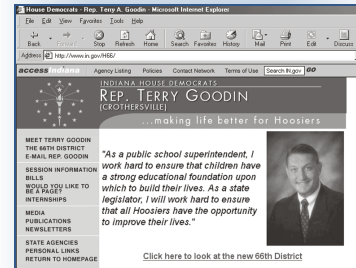
Child protection remains a top legislative priority

This year some of our most important work in the legislature came in passing laws to improve upon the safety of Indiana's children. The Amber Alert program, set forth in Senate Bill 20, establishes a missing child network. This network includes a statewide, toll-free telephone line to report missing children and sightings of missing children, a clearinghouse of child identification and investigative information, and agreements with local television stations to broadcast information about a missing child.

Legislators took several steps against sexual predators. Senate Bill 482 toughens laws against soliciting a child over the Internet, permitting a police officer to pose undercover as a child in order to capture offenders. This law also makes it a crime to fondle oneself in front of a child.

In recent years there has been an increase of Websites that specialize in photos of children and child pornography. House Bill 1010 applies existing state laws dealing with child exploitation, possession of child pornography and obscenity to these digital images.

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